



# Vranashopha: An Ayurvedic Approach to wound healing through Jalaukavacharana (Bloodletting)

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**Abstract :** Vranashopha, a Raktapradoshaja Vyadhi, is characterized by inflammation, swelling, and pain in the Twacha or Mamsa Dhatu due to vitiated Doshas<sup>i</sup>. According to Ayurveda, the imbalance of Doshas, particularly Pitta and Rakta, leads to the manifestation of inflammatory conditions. The pathogenesis aligns with the principles of Samprapti (disease evolution) described in classical texts, which emphasize the role of Dosha-Dushya Sammurchana in disease onset<sup>ii</sup>.

Vranashopha can be clinically correlated with cellulitis, a bacterial infection causing subcutaneous inflammation. The involvement of Pitta and Rakta in the vitiation process aligns with the concept of Ushna-Tikshna Guna leading to Daha (burning sensation) and Shopha (swelling). Acharya Sushruta's principle of Shodhana (detoxification) is crucial in managing such conditions, wherein Rakta Mokshana (bloodletting) serves as an effective therapeutic intervention<sup>iii</sup>.

A 45-year-old female patient presented with pain, swelling, burning sensation, and itching in bilateral lower limbs and was treated with Jalaukavacharana (leech therapy), Parisheka (medicated decoction pouring), and Shamanoushadhi (oral medications). These treatments are guided by the principles of Dosha Shamana (pacification of vitiated humors) and Rakta Prasadana (blood purification). The therapy aligns with the Tridosha principle, addressing the dominance of Pitta-Rakta Dushti in inflammatory conditions. The sequential use of Jalaukavacharana and Parisheka follows the concept of Shodhana (purification) and Shamana (pacification), ensuring symptomatic relief and disease resolution.

Significant symptom relief was observed post-treatment. This study highlights the efficacy of Ayurvedic bloodletting in managing Vranashopha by restoring Dosha equilibrium, reducing inflammatory markers, and promoting tissue healing through Ayurvedic Siddhantas.

**Keywords:** Vranashopha, Ayurveda, Jalaukavacharana, Raktamokshana, Bloodletting, Cellulitis, Pitta-Rakta Dushti, Shodhana, Shamana, Inflammation, Wound healing, Rakta Pradoshaja Vyadhi, Leech therapy, Parisheka, Dosha-Dushya Sammurchana, Dashamoola Kadha, Mahasudarshana Kadha, Manjishtadi Kashaya, Kaishora Guggulu

## INTRODUCTION

Vranashopha is an early stage of Vrana (wound formation) and, if left untreated, can progress to ulceration. Acharya Sushruta emphasized Vrana management through Shasti Upakarma (sixty procedures), with Rakta Mokshana (bloodletting) being a primary intervention for inflammatory conditions<sup>iv v</sup>. Among its techniques, Jalaukavacharana (leech therapy) is particularly effective for Rakta Dushti (vitiated blood disorders), facilitating detoxification and reducing inflammation. This aligns with the Ayurvedic principle that vitiated Rakta is the root cause of many inflammatory conditions, and its controlled removal helps in restoring homeostasis<sup>vi vii</sup>.

The mechanism of Vranashopha is described in Ayurveda as an interplay between Dosha vitiation, Dhatu involvement, and Srotas (microchannel) blockage, leading to localized inflammation<sup>viii</sup>. The involvement of Pitta and Rakta contributes to Ushnata (heat), Daha (burning), and Raga (redness), while Kapha aggravation leads to Shopha (swelling) and Manda Vedana (dull pain). Ayurveda explains that purificatory measures like Rakta Mokshana not only remove the vitiated blood but also help in pacifying associated Doshas, thereby facilitating wound healing and preventing complications.

Jalaukavacharana, as one of the foremost Raktamokshana techniques, offers a painless and effective method to eliminate morbid blood. Leeches secrete bioactive compounds, including hirudin (anticoagulant), calin (platelet aggregation inhibitor), and eglins (anti-inflammatory agents), which collectively reduce inflammation, improve circulation, and enhance tissue regeneration<sup>ix</sup>. The use of Parisheka with Aragvadhadi Kashaya further aids in local detoxification and wound cleansing, accelerating the healing process<sup>x</sup>.

In contemporary medicine, Vranashopha resembles cellulitis, a spreading bacterial infection of the subcutaneous tissue. Modern treatment involves antibiotics and anti-inflammatory drugs, whereas Ayurveda offers holistic management through detoxification, pacification therapies, and lifestyle modifications. Ayurveda considers Vranashopha as not merely a local condition but an outcome of systemic Dosha imbalance, thus necessitating a comprehensive approach that includes dietary regulation, herbal formulations, and bio-purificatory therapies<sup>xi</sup>.

The integration of Ayurvedic concepts like Shodhana and Shamana ensures that treatment not only alleviates symptoms but also addresses the root cause, preventing recurrence. By focusing on restoring Dosha equilibrium and enhancing the body's innate healing mechanisms, Ayurveda provides a sustainable alternative to conventional management of cellulitis-like conditions<sup>xii</sup>.

## AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The establishment of large hospitals where hundreds to thousands of patients are treated, it has created a serious problems of To assess the efficacy of Ayurvedic management, particularly Jalaukavacharana, in Vranashopha (cellulitis).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Type of Study: Single-case study

CASE HISTORY-Chief Complaints:

A 45-year-old female presented with pain, swelling, burning sensation, and itching in bilateral lower limbs for 15 days.

History: Symptoms gradually developed, and initial allopathic treatment with antibiotics provided no relief. The patient then sought Ayurvedic management.

Examinations:

- General: Pulse – 82 bpm, BP – 120/70 mmHg, R.R – 17/min, Temp – 98.5°F
- Local: Swelling, blackish discoloration, mild temperature rise, tenderness, and pitting edema.
- Blood Investigations: Hb% - 11 g/dL, TLC - 6200 cells/cmm, RBS - 123 mg/dL, Sr. Creatinine - 1.2 mg/dL, ESR - 55 mm/hr.

### TREATMENT PROTOCOL 1. Jalaukavacharana (Leech Therapy)

- Poorva Karma (Pre-procedure): The affected limb was washed with Panchavalkala Kashaya, and leeches were activated in turmeric water.
- Pradhana Karma (Main Procedure): Leeches were applied at inflamed sites. Bloodletting was indicated by visible wavy movements. The leeches were covered with a wet swab to maintain an optimal environment.
- Paschat Karma (Post-procedure): After natural detachment, turmeric powder was applied, and leeches were cleansed with Haridra Churna to induce regurgitation of ingested blood.

### 2. Parisheka (Decoction Pouring Therapy)

- Aragvadhadi Kashaya (containing Aragvadhya, Indrayava, Nimba, and Patola) was used to cleanse and pacify inflammation.

### 3. Shamanoushadhi (Oral Medications)

Medicine	Dose	Anupana
Dashamoola Kadha	15 ml twice daily	Warm water
Mahasudarshana Kadha	15 ml twice daily	Warm water
Manjishatadi Kashaya	15 ml once daily	Warm water
Kaishora Guggulu	1 tablet twice daily	Warm water

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

I. Symptoms	Before Treatment	3rd Day	4th Day	6th Day	7th Day
Pain (Vedana)	+++	++	+	+	+
Swelling (Shotha)	+++	++	+	+	+
Discoloration	++	++	++	++	+

Burning Sensation (Daha)	++	++	+	+	+
Tenderness (Sparsha Asahata)	+++	+++	++	+	+
Warmth (Ushnata)	++	++	+	+	+

By Day 7, significant reductions in pain, swelling, and tenderness were observed.

IMAGES



BEFORE TREATMENT 24-11-2024



DURING TREATMENT 05-12-2024





AFTER THE TREATMENT 12-12-2024

## DISCUSSION

Vranashopha is a Rakta Dushti condition, and Acharya Sushruta prescribed Rakta Mokshana as the first line of treatment. Jalaukavacharana is particularly useful in such conditions due to its painless, effective removal of vitiated blood and inflammatory mediators.

- Mechanism of Action: Leech saliva contains bioactive components like hirudin (anticoagulant), calin (platelet aggregation inhibitor), and eglins (anti-inflammatory agents), which collectively reduce inflammation, improve microcirculation, and promote healing.
- Adjunctive Therapies:
  - Aragvadhadi Kashaya: Detoxifies blood and alleviates inflammation.
  - Dashamoola Kadha & Mahasudarshana Kadha: Reduce edema and systemic inflammation.
  - Manjishatadi Kashaya & Kaishora Guggulu: Purify blood and expedite wound healing.

**CONCLUSION**

Ayurvedic management, particularly Jalaukavacharana, effectively reduces Vranashopha symptoms, making it a viable alternative to conventional treatment. This therapy is cost-effective, minimally invasive, and aligns with natural healing principles.

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